



**Tom C. Rawlings**

Director



**GEORGIA RESILIENT.** YOUTH-CENTERED. STABLE. EMPOWERED.

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**JOHN H. CHAFEE PROGRAM FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD**

# It's In the Meeting: Utilizing the roundtable process for youth plan development!

Candis L. Jones, LAPC

GARYSE Chafee Program  
Director





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To provide eligible youth with opportunities to successfully prepare for adulthood through appropriate referral resources and connections provided by community partners. For years, adolescents who left foster care have experienced significant challenges in successfully transitioning to adulthood.

Georgia recognized that without appropriate services, planning and support, these youth demonstrated higher rates of homelessness, unemployment, poverty, delinquent or criminal behaviors, and dependence on various types of public assistance.

In response to these identified transition challenges, Georgia implemented standards in support of Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and Education Training Vouchers (ETV).



# OUR MISSION



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To ensure youth are stable, healthy,  
connected, employed, and educated.



**OUR  
VISION**

It's Time for  
an Activity!!



## What we need...

- 3 Volunteers
- First three to type *"I will"* in chat
- You will be sent a direct message about your role in the activity





# Case Planning From a Legal Perspective







Why involve youth in case planning? Um well cause....

# Fostering Connections Act of 2008

- Requires that a transition plan is developed for youth exiting foster care
- Must be developed at least 90 days before the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, or the age required by the state for aging out of care
- Must be developed with the youth, their case manager, and other representatives of the youth's choosing
- Should include elements such as housing, education, employment, mentoring, and continued supporters.

# Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014

- Requires that children age 14 and older be consulted in the development of their case plan
- Directs states to allow youth to invite TWO other members identified by the youth (other than their foster parent or case worker) to be a part of the case planning team\*
- Requires states to provide a written list of “Youth Rights” to youth ages 14 and older outlining their rights to education, healthcare, visitations, court hearings/participating, and the right to stay safe
- Requires states to provide youth with a free credit report

# Written Transitional Living Plan (WTLP)

The WTLP is a written description of the programs and services that will assist the youth in preparing for the transition from foster care to independent living. Should be developed with the youth during a Transitional Round Table.

The WTLP serves as the guidepost to the internal and external programmatic connections necessary to support the youth's success.

## ***The WTLP must be completed within 30 day of:***

- A youth 14 years of age or older entering foster care; or a youth in foster care reaching 14 years of age;
- A youth reaching 18 years of age and receiving Extended Youth Support Services (EYSS);
- A youth's participating in EYSS after exiting custody at 18 years of age or older;
- Identifying additional needs for a youth with an existing WTLP, including those identified upon completion of the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA);
- New outcomes and tasks being ordered by the court; or g. The WTLP outcomes being achieved.



What's  
the  
plan?

# Transitional Meetings

The transitional meeting jointly develops specific plans to address permanent connections, housing, health insurance/health needs, education, job skills, independent living skills.

During these meetings – the youth's Written Transitional Living Plan is reviewed and discussed.

All transitional meetings begin at age 16 and must be held every six months after the initial meeting and continued through the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.



# Case Life Skills Assessment

- The Division utilizes the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) to assess the life skills, strengths and vulnerabilities of youth ages 14-17 in foster care.
- It is administered within 15 calendar days of a youth ages 14 -17 entering foster care or a youth in foster care turning age 14.
- It measures a youth's confidence in their future and permanent connections to supportive adults
- Designed to be free from gender, ethnic or cultural biases
- The results of the CLSA are incorporated in the WTLP – and supportive life skills workshop trainings are provided to support identified needs

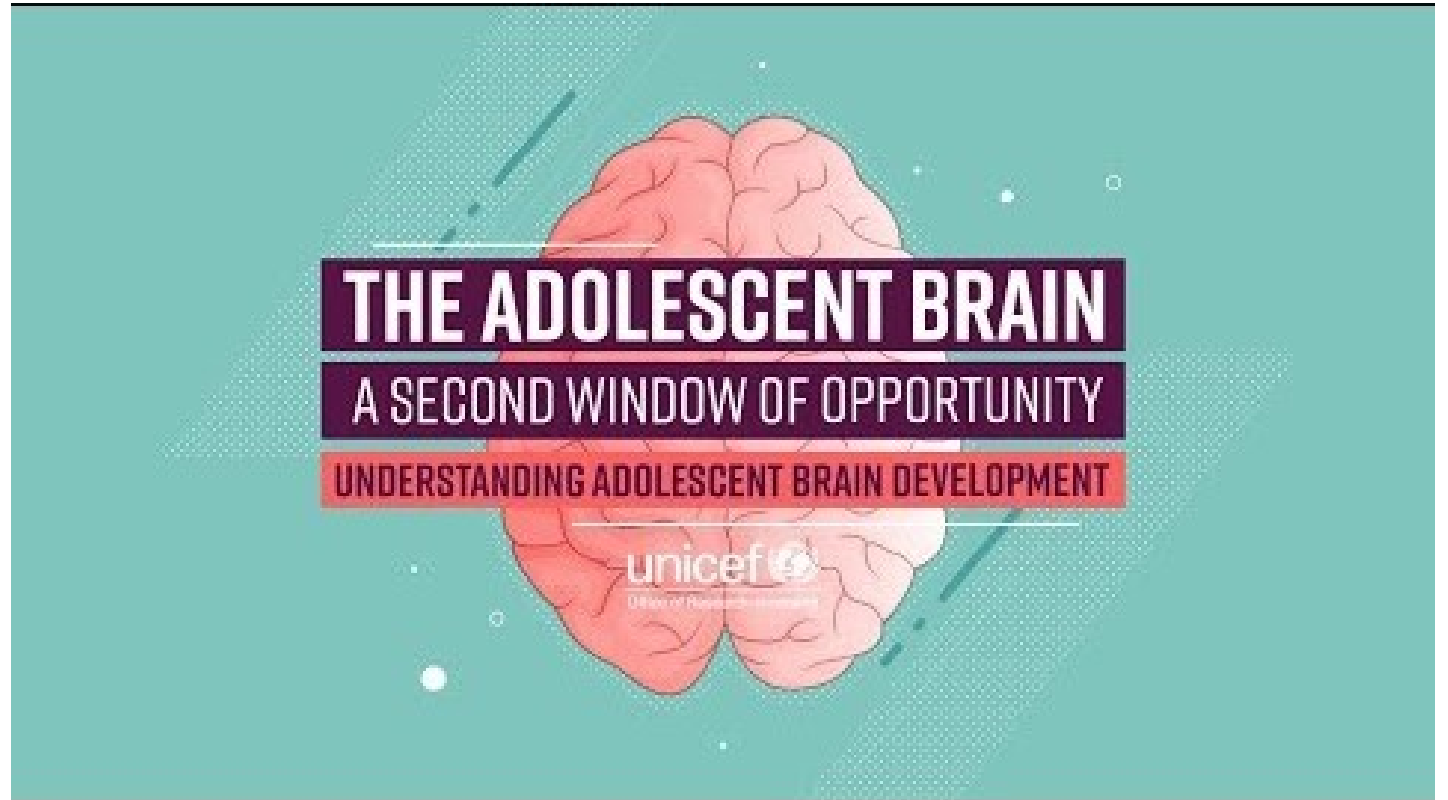




# Case Planning from A Physiological Perspective



But first let us  
discuss what's  
happening in  
their heads....





Midbrain

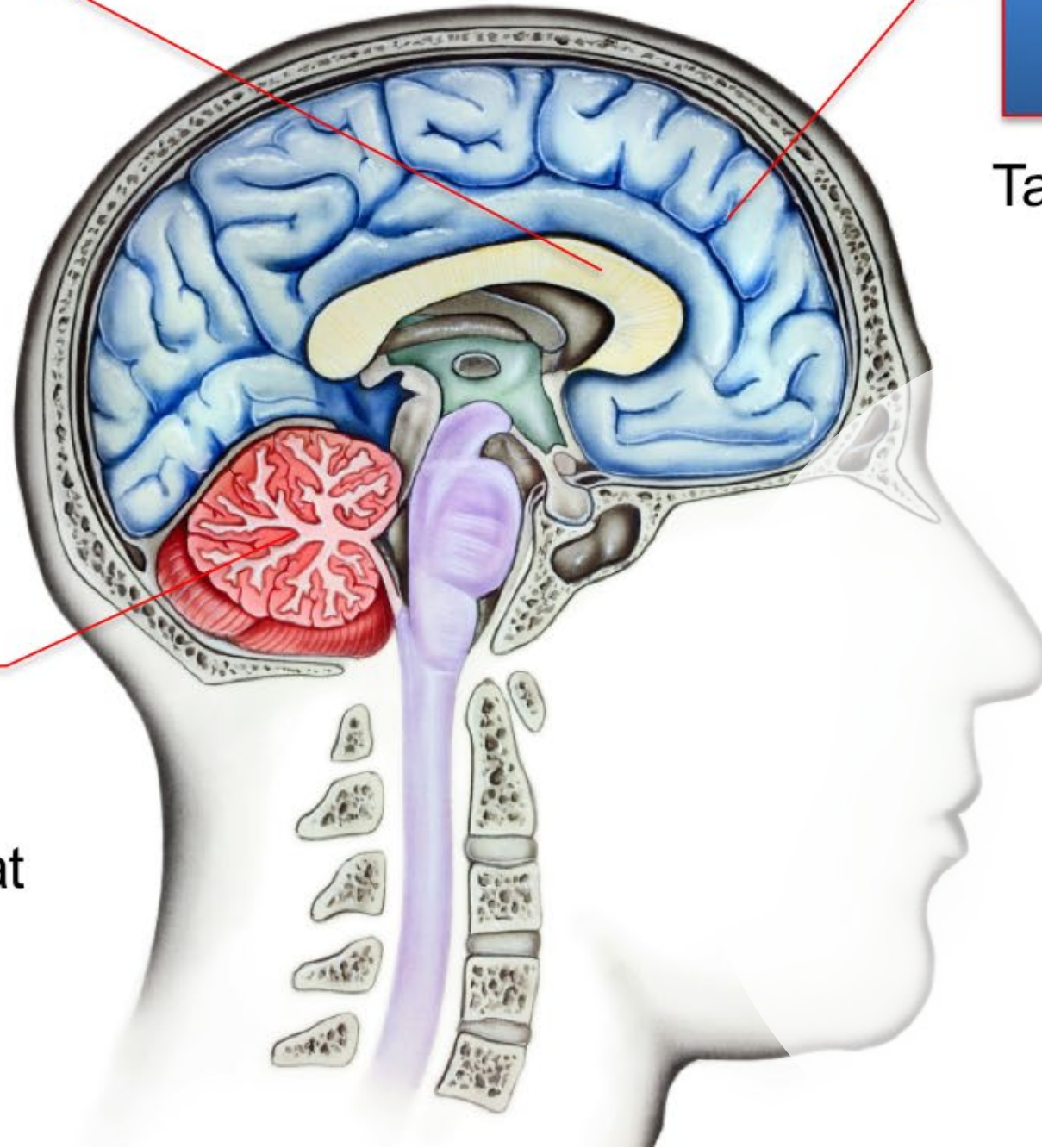
Feel – Remember  
Interact with others

Neocortex

Talk – Think – Move  
Create - Learn

Reptilian Brain

Survive – React – Repeat  
Repeat-Repeat



# What's happening in their heads when they are at the table...

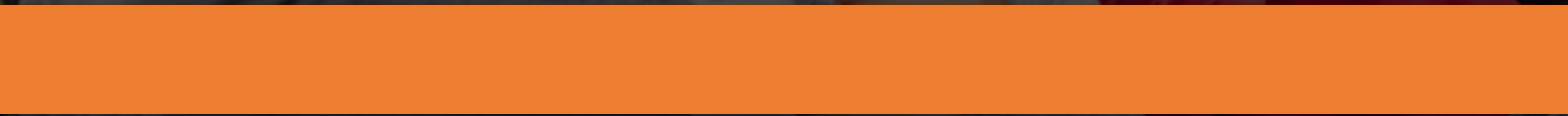
- Rely heavily on the emotional center of the brain for decision making and are more likely to engage in risky behavior
- In foster care – youth experience stressful situations more frequently than their peers - vulnerable to making decisions under “hot cognition” – based on emotional arousal or peer pressure
  - Examples of “hot cognition” – changes in housing, facing discrimination, getting in trouble with peers, and feeling blamed
- Planning meetings present a space of “hot cognition” if the youth is not prepared or not given adequate time to process what is happening
- If they experienced a recent stressor before the planning meeting – they may be functioning in that space and operating from their reptilian brain

# Remember that they've experienced trauma....

- Trauma impacts key structures of the brain
  - Hippocampus that helps with memory and spatial navigation
  - Amygdala helps with emotional processing
  - Cortex – cognition and personality expression and moderating social behavior
- Trauma causes an intense, biological alarm state – a rush of adrenaline, cortisol and other hormones, as well as intense fear
  - They are not thinking – instead they are thinking on how can they fight against or flee what they perceive to be a threatening situation
  - Have trouble processing information
  - Brain adapts for survival



# Case Planning from a Psychosocial Perspective



# Adolescent Stages of Development

## **Middle Adolescence (ages 15-17)**

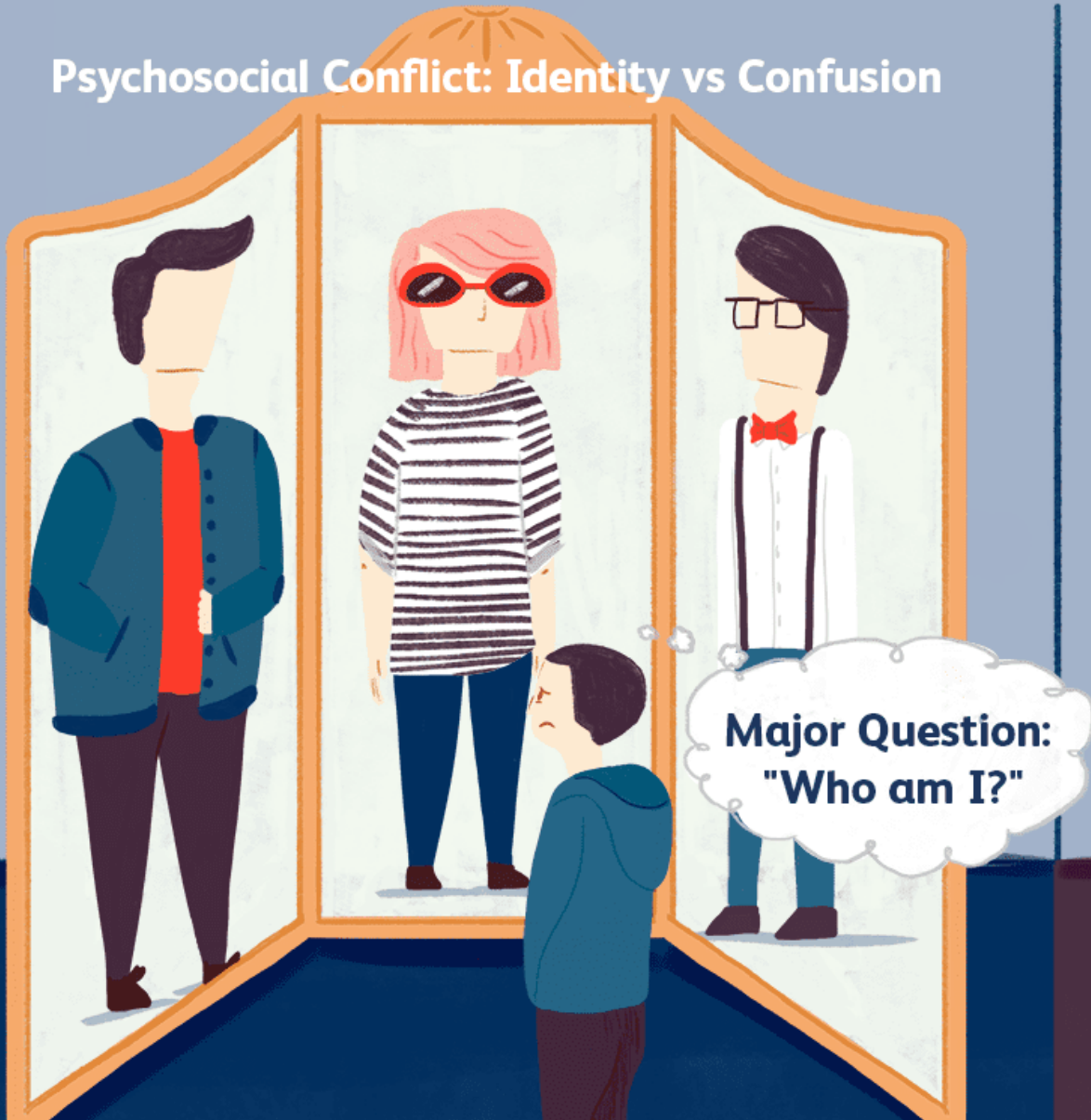
- Begin to set long-term goals
- Growing capacity for abstract thought
- Become interested in the meaning of life and moral reasoning
- During this stage they experience numerous social and emotional changes, increased self-involvement, and increased drive for independence

## **Late Adolescence/Young Adulthood**

- Fewer physical developments – more cognitive
- Gain ability to think rationally and delay gratification
- Plan for the future and gain a firm sense of identity
- Increased emotional stability and independence

# Adolescent Psychosocial Development

Psychosocial Conflict: Identity vs Confusion



Basic Virtue: Fidelity



Important Event: Social Relationships



# Preparing the Young Person Before the Meeting



# How does it feel?



When you walk into an unfamiliar place, with unfamiliar people, little instructions, no direction



# Before the Case Planning Meeting

## Prepare the YOUTH!!!!!!

- Explain why having a meeting is important and what they should expect. Let them know about their rights and OPTIONS!! (*Informed consent*)
- Give them an opportunity to ask you questions and to think things over and understand what to expect
  - *If not, they will review your discussion as potentially threatening – calm does not mean okay.*
- Explain what will happen – where will it be held, how the meeting is run, who facilitates, who can ask questions, what information may be discussed
- Make them feel comfortable
  - *When they feel unsafe – they will respond emotionally – all humans do it...even you!*
- Have them prepare a list of their own goals and put them in the plan
- Ask them to identify two (or more if necessary) people they would like to participate

1	a) One or both of my Parents	23.29%	68
2	b) One or more of my Siblings	15.41%	45
3	c) One of my friends	10.62%	31
4	d) My Attorney	15.75%	46
5	e) My Therapist	18.15%	53
6	f) My Teacher/Coach	10.27%	30
7	g) My pastor or someone from my church	6.51%	19
			292

In the case of who the want to be in their meeting...the results say...

In a recent survey of youth conducted by the Division youth identified the individuals they would like to attend their meetings....they could choose more than one category.

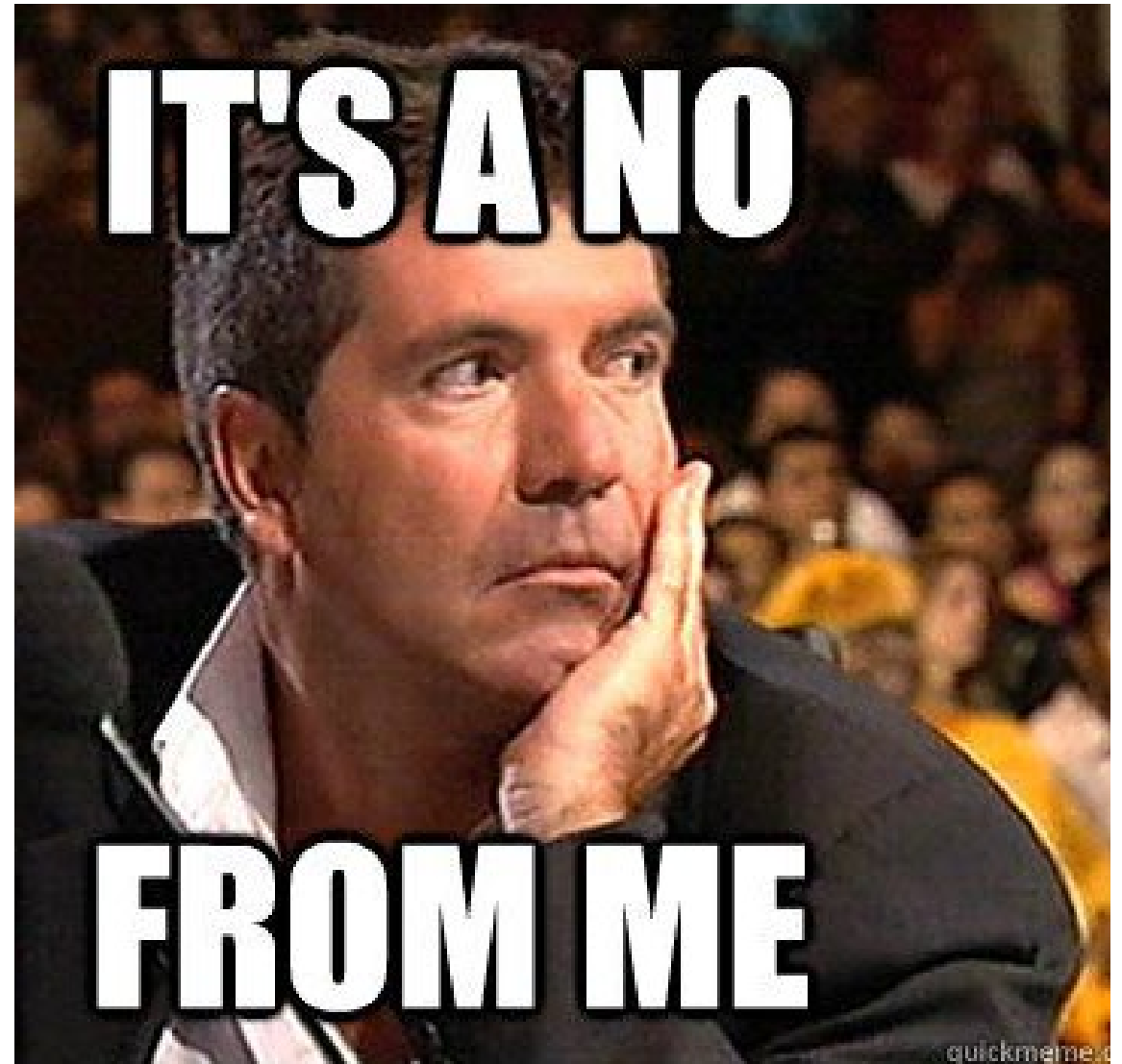


During the Meeting



# A few things you SHOULDN'T do...

- Keep retelling the youth's foster care entry story...it's retraumatizing
  - You want to share the most embarrassing hurtful thing that has ever happened to you, or the worst thing you did to EVERYONE....EVERYTIME??
- No Surprises!
  - Make sure the young person knows what is going to be discussed during the transition planning meeting.
- Talk about the youth as if they are not in the room...
  - Ever been made to feel invisible....not a good feeling
- Get caught up in adolescent behavior –
  - Respond to and heal the trauma....not the cacophony of distorted sound coming from the young person
- Pressure them to talk if they feel cornered...
  - Give them some time to breathe...
- Allow other participants to dominate the conversation
  - If the adults are talking more than the youth....it is not a good meeting (*sorry...not sorry*)

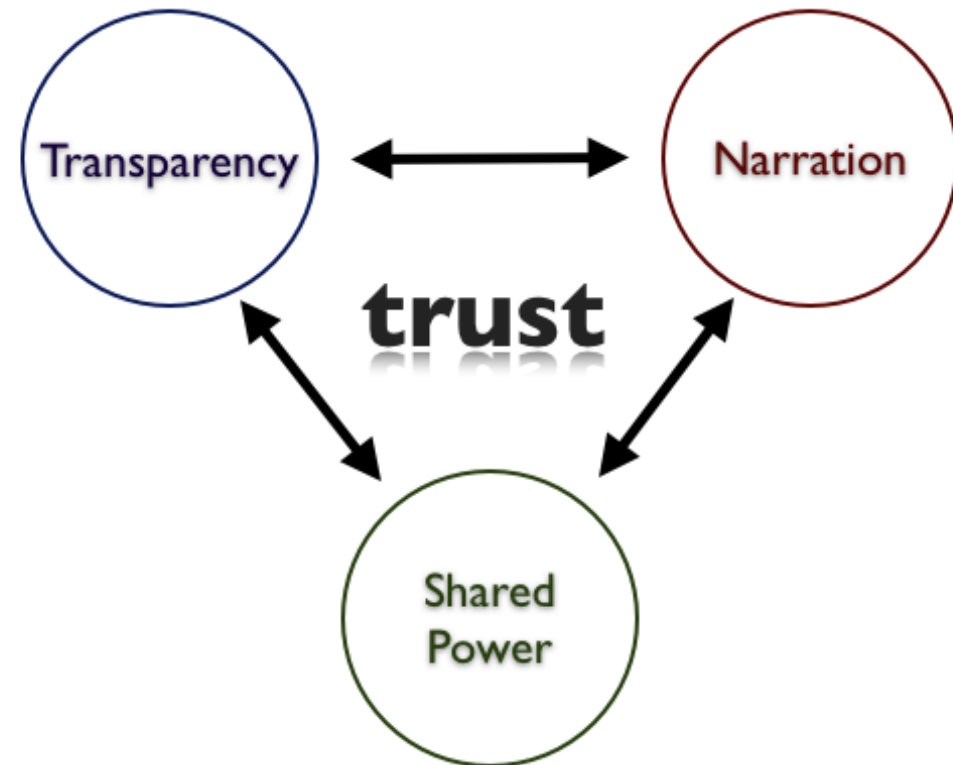


**DO** *this*  
*Not* **THAT**

- Be Inclusive. Make space for the young person's voice and ideas.
- Be accountable. Follow through on the action items you agreed to do.
- Trust the process. Engaging young people in team-based planning can take extra effort but it pays off in the long run.
- Make connections with the youth in and outside of the meeting or planning process.

# Share Power with the Youth....

- Power sharing is not power relinquishing or power wielding....
  - We understand policies and regulations....but we are talking about humans – and policy isn't always equitable
- Shared decision making
  - Let the youth fail...you are not failing them - *but you will if you don't let them*
- The entire group should be a collective of parties that have wisdom and expertise of the youths informal and formal helping system
- Talk through the decisions - ask open ended questions to help the youth with their planning efforts
- Ask questions before offering a suggestion
- Let the youth begin to share their perspective of what should happen for the areas identified that need focus





# Lead from a Strength's Based Perspective

- Highlight all of the youth's goals, ideas, strengths, and activities that they come up with. Avoid showing preference for the things that you agree with or feel like the youth should be working towards.
- Have discussions with the youth to help the youth think through and describe plan goals most important to him/her.



**The following individuals may be invited to the meeting by the young person:**

- any support persons identified by the them such as:
  - siblings and other relatives;
  - friends, neighbors, caregivers or babysitters;
  - significant others (boyfriend/girlfriend);
  - members of the family's faith/spiritual community;
  - school contacts such as teachers, principals, counselors, coaches;
- potential caregivers (relatives or individuals who have a significant relationship with the young person); or
- attorneys
- Service providers/therapists





Let's Open for  
Questions...

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Additional Information on the  
GARYSE Chafee Program may be found  
by accessing:

[www.GARYSE-ILP.org](http://www.GARYSE-ILP.org)